

Substance Abuse Prevention

Environmental Prevention Needs Assessment Workbook SFY2014



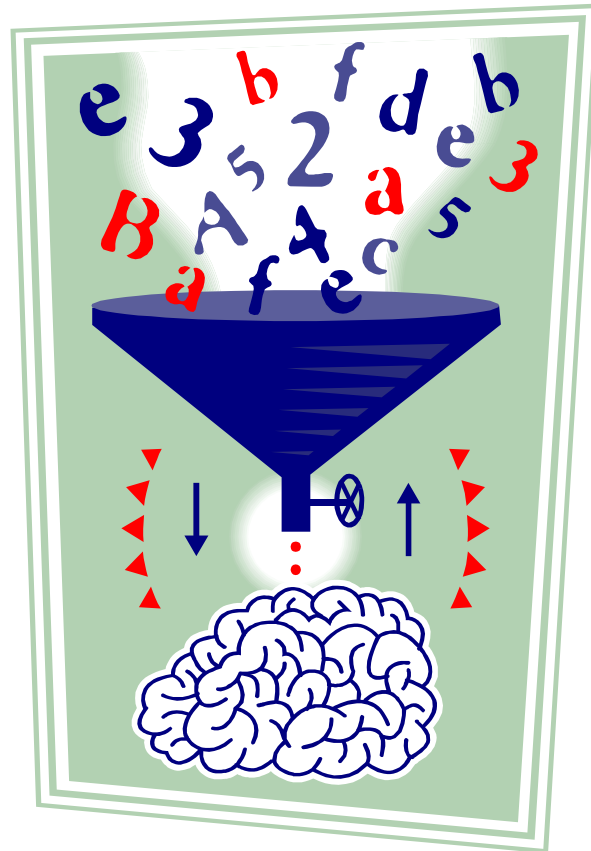
Part 3 Analysis & Recommendations

Version 1
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TABLE OF CONTENTS – Part 3

PROBLEMS	3
A. Consequences	4
B. Consumption.....	.6
C. Risk factors.....	9
CAUSAL AREAS	11
A. Retail Availability	12
B. Criminal Justice	15
C. Social Availability	19
D. Promotion.....	21
E. School Policies.....	23
F. Medical Field Information	24
PRIORITIZATION	25
FINAL QUESTION	28

Problems



Task One:
Explore Consequence and Consumption Data in Your Community
in Order to Identify What Problems are of Greatest Concern

CONSEQUENCES – PART 3

Alcohol-related consequences are defined as the social, economic and health problems associated with binge drinking. This first section looks at the alcohol-related motor vehicle crash data and will help you understand the impact or consequence this has on your community. While it is recognized that not all communities will experience exactly the same impact, the consequence this project is focused on reducing is motor vehicle crashes.

Motor Vehicle Crashes

One of the major consequences of drinking alcohol is motor vehicle crashes resulting in injury and death. Drinking and driving have significant negative consequences for Montana's population. Your task will be to use the motor vehicle crash information for your community, rate the data and compare it with the state data using Workbook Part 1 - Tables 2 through 4.

QUESTION 1 Motor Vehicle Crashes

Based on Tables 2 through 4 and any other local data, how do alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes in your community compare to alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Although Flathead County has a high percentage of **alcohol-related crashes with injuries**, our county is **below the state rate** for alcohol-related crashes with injuries for the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012. Flathead County had a total of 574 alcohol related crashes for the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012, compared to 7,111 for the entire state of Montana for those same years. Flathead County's rate per 100,000 populations for those years is 125.72 as compared to the state's rate per 100,000 populations of 142.22

However, what the data does not show, is that Flathead County, unfortunately, had three Montana Highway Patrolman lose their life, while on duty, due to vehicle crashes involving impaired drivers.

Additionally, for **alcohol-related crashes with fatalities for all races**, Flathead County is **below the state rate** for the years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, but higher than the state rate for the year 2008. With a total of 36 fatalities due to alcohol-related crashes between the years 2008 – 2012, Flathead County had 7% of the alcohol-related total state fatalities due to alcohol related crashes.

And, interestingly, Flathead County had no reported **alcohol-related crashes with fatalities for American Indians**.

Underage Drinking and Driving

QUESTION 2 Underage Drinking and Driving

Based on Tables 5 through 7 and your community's own local data, how does underage drinking and driving in your community compare to drinking and driving across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

The total number of **Flathead County students, in grades 8, 10 and 12,** who drove a vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol, during the past 30 days, for all races was 11.5% in 2008, 8.2% in 2010, and 8.2% in 2012, which is **less than the state averages** for the years 2008 (14.1%), 2010 (9.8%), and 2012 (9.3%). However, in reviewing the data by grades, it reveals that the percentage of Flathead County students in 8th grade for the year 2010 was slightly higher (.06%) than the state wide percentage. And, in 2012, the percentage of 10th grade Flathead County students was who drove a vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol, during the past 30 days was 9.9%, which is 15% percent higher than the state wide rate of 8.6%.

Based on the latest PNA data (year 2012), the rate for Flathead County students, in grades 8, 10, and 12, driving a vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol, during the past 30 days is **12% less than the state wide percentage** for the same grades and year.

High School Students Riding in Car Driving by Someone Who Has Been Drinking

QUESTION 3 High School Students riding in a Car Driven by Someone Who Has Been Drinking

Based on Tables 8 through 10 and your community's own local data, how does high school students riding in a car driven by someone who has been drinking in your community compare students riding in a car driven by someone who has been drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

In the years 2008 and 2010 the total percentage of Flathead County students **who rode in a car with someone who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days,** in grades 8, 10 and 12 was 28.5% in 2008, and 27.6% in 2010. These percentages are **less than the state wide percentage of students in those same grades.** Those state percentages are 33.1% in 2008, and 28.3% in 2010. Unfortunately, in year 2012, in Flathead County, 26.8 % of high school students in grades 8, 10, and 12 had ridden in a vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking which is **higher than the state wide percentage of (25.3%) of students in those same grades, by 6%.**

On a good note, the percentage of Flathead County students in 12th grade in 2012, (23.8%) who had ridden in a vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking, was less than the state wide percentage (25.9%) for 12th graders in 2012.

Additionally, in comparing the percentage of Flathead County 12th graders in 2012 who rode with someone who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days, it is noted that the percentage is **24.4% less than in year 2008 and 8.4% less than in year 2010!** A great improvement and good trend downward!!

Final Consequence Question

QUESTION 4

Based on all of the consequence data analyzed here and your answers to Questions 1 through 3, how is motor vehicle crashes, underage drinking and driving, and high school students riding in vehicles driven by driver who had been drinking impacting your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

Probably the biggest impact, based on Flathead County data, is the fact that youth who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence and two and a half times more likely to become abusers of alcohol than those who begin drinking at age 21. So the consequences spill over to the adult issues of impaired driving, motor vehicles crashes, family dysfunction, and poor adult role modeling for youth, which then perpetuates the cycle of substance abuse.

Additionally, based on information provided by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) with funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), it is known that underage drinking cost the citizens of Montana \$0.2 billion in 2010, which translates to a cost of \$2,580 per year for each youth, in the State from the harm caused by underage drinking. The breakdown is as follows:

Youth violence	\$94.5 million	FAS among Mothers age 15-20...	\$ 5.7 million
Youth Traffic Crashes	\$81.4 million	Youth Alcohol Treatment	\$19.6 million
High Risk Sex, Ages 14-20...	\$18.1 million		
Youth Property Crime.....	\$12.9 million		
Youth Injury.....	\$10.6 million		
Poisonings & Psychoses.....	\$ 2.4 million		

Based on this information, underage drinking cost the taxpayers and businesses of Flathead County \$33,070,440 in 2010. (Approximately 12,818 youth between the ages of 10 to 20 years of age (2010 Census) times \$2,580 = \$33,070,440.) That figure certainly helps to put in perspective the high cost of underage drinking not only from a health standpoint, but from a fiscal aspect, as well.

CONSUMPTION – PART 3

This section looks at consumption data and will help you identify which alcohol-related consumption problems are greatest in your community. Consumption data includes binge drinking, underage drinking and driving, and high school students riding in cars driven by someone drinking. While it is recognized that not all communities will experience exactly the same problems the specific focus for the SPF SIG will be binge drinking.

Underage Binge Drinking

QUESTION 5 Underage Binge Drinking

Based on Tables 11 through 14 and your community's own local data, how does underage binge drinking in your community compare to underage binge drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

In 2008 Flathead County's **total percentage of students binge drinking in the past two weeks, for grades 8, 10 and 12**, was 22.8%, which is less than the state percentage of 24.5% for the same grades and year. In 2010 Flathead County's total **percentage of students binge drinking in the past two weeks**, was 20.3% which is less than the state percentage of 21.4%, for the same grades and year. In 2012 Flathead County's total **percentage of students binge drinking in the past two weeks for grades 8, 10, and 12** was 19.2%, which is less than the state percentage of 21.2% for the same grades and year. More specifically, in year 2008, Flathead County was 7.5% less than the MT state percentage in grades 8, 10 & 12, in year 2010 Flathead County was 5.42% less than the MT state percentage in grades 8, 10 & 12, and in year 2012 Flathead County was 10.4% less than the MT state percentage in grades 8,10 & 12.

However, in year 2012, Flathead County's percentage was higher in grade 8 (10.3%) and grade 10 (22.5%) than the 2012 MT state average for grade 8 (10.0%), and grade 10 (21.7%). On a positive note, the percentage of 12th grade students in Flathead County who had been binge drinking in the past two weeks in 2012 was 19.2%, which is considerably less than the state percentage of 21.2% for the same grade and year – by 28.7%!

Adult Binge Drinking

QUESTION 6 Adult Binge Drinking

Based on Tables 15 and 16 and your community's own local data, how does adult binge drinking in your community compare to adult binge drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

No local data to compare to the state rate to answer this question.

Underage Drinking (30 Day Use for Alcohol)

QUESTION 7 Underage Drinking Based on Tables 17 through 19 and your community's own local data, how does underage drinking in your community compare to underage drinking across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

The total **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 Days** in Flathead County, in years 2008, 2010 and 2012 for grades 8, 10 and 12 is less than the total state **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 Days**, for the same years and grades. More specifically, in 2008 the total Flathead County percentage for grades 8, 10, 12 was 37.1%, which is 3.5% less than the state wide percentage of 38.4% for the same grades. In 2010 the **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 days** in Flathead County was 32.3%, which is 8.4% less than the state wide percentage of 35.0%, and in 2012 the **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 Days** in Flathead County was 33.8% which is 3.8% less than the state wide percentage of 35.1%. However, in Flathead County in 2012, in grade 8 the **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 Days** was **19.9%**, which is higher than the state wide percentage of 18.8% for grade 8. And in Flathead County for grade 10 the **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 Days** was 37.9%, which is higher than the state wide percentage of 36.9%. The good news is that in 2012 for grade 12, the Flathead County **Percentage of Students Drinking in the Past 30 Days** is 43.7%, which is 13.3% less than state wide percentage of 49.5% for grade 12. This same trend holds true for years 2008 and 2010. So it would appear, that Flathead County 12 graders are drinking less than their state counter parts, but the 8th and 10 graders are drinking more, based on past 30 day use rates.

The relevancy of knowing this information is that it will provide justification for targeting the parents of 8th and 10th graders with information about the dangers of underage drinking, and will provide justification for targeting the "Above the Influence" campaign heavily in those grades.

Prescription Drug Abuse by Youth (30 Day Use)

QUESTION 8 Prescription Drug Abuse

Based on Tables 20 and 22 and your community's own local data, how does the data about prescription drug abuse by youth in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

In year 2008 the Percentage of Flathead County **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days** in grades 8, 10, and 12 was 5.8%. There are no 2008 state percentages available for **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 days**.

In 2010 the percentage of Flathead County **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days** in grades 8, 10, and 12 was 7.8%. The state percentage for **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days** for grades 8, 10, and 12 was 4.0% which means that, unfortunately,

Flathead County **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days** in 2010, for grades 8, 10, and 12 is 48.7% higher than the state rate for the same year and grades.

In 2012, Flathead County **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days** was 5.2% for grades 8, 10, and 12. This percentage is 48.5% higher than the state wide percentage for **Students Using Prescription Drugs in the Past 30 Days**, which was 3.5% for the same year and grades.

It is easy to become very alarmed when looking at how much higher Flathead County percentages are above the state percentage, however, compared to underage alcohol use, and underage binge drinking, the percentage of Flathead County students using Prescription Drugs in the past 30 days is much, much less. The importance of knowing this information is that Flathead County should definitely make the prevention and reduction of prescription drug use a priority, and begin implementing strategies and activities to educate Flathead County parents, youth and community members of the dangers of prescription drug use, and ways to prevent it.

Final Consumption Question

QUESTION 9

Based on all of the consumption data analyzed here and your answers to Questions 5 through 8, how are underage drinking, binge drinking, and prescription drug abuse impacting your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

Research tells us that the dangers of underage drinking to youth are many – criminal mischief, truancy, STD's, unplanned pregnancies, sexual assaults, impaired brain development, youth suicide, homicide, traumatic injury, drowning, burns, fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol poisoning, violent behavior, property crimes, and death. These are the ways that underage drinking is impacting the Flathead County community, as well as, Flathead County youth.

From the research done by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE), it is known that the cost of underage drinking cost the citizens of Montana \$0.2 billion in 2010. Youth violence cost the citizens of Montana \$94.5 million dollars in 2010, Youth Traffic Crashes cost \$81.4 million dollars – so, it is easy to see that underage drinking is not just a youth problem, but it affects each and every community member in Flathead County, and throughout the state of Montana - either in a fiscal manner, or in a personal way, citizens have been affected by the consequences of underage drinking from criminal mischief, homicide, property crimes and automobile crashes. It is and continues to be the most commonly used drug among Montana's youth, and it should continue to be a prevention priority in Flathead County, as well as the entire state, due to the consequences described above, on the youth in the State of Montana.

RISK FACTORS - PART 3

Perception of Parental Disapproval/Attitude

QUESTION 10 Parental Attitudes and Disapproval

Based on Table 23 and your community's own local data, how does the data about parental attitudes and disapproval towards alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

In year 2008, the Percentage of Flathead County students **Who Perceive Parental Disapproval towards Alcohol/Drug Use** was 80.2% for grades 8, 10, and 12, this was almost identical to the state percentage of 80.3% for the same year and grades.

In year 2010 for grades 8, 10, and 12, the percentage of Flathead County students **Who Perceive Parental Disapproval towards Alcohol/Drug Use** was 83.2%, which is higher than the state percentage of 81.8% for the same year and grades.

In year 2012 the percentage of Flathead County students **Who Perceive Parental Disapproval towards Alcohol/Drug Use** was 83.3%, which is 1.8% higher than the state rate of 81.8% for the same year and grades. These high rates of perception of parental disapproval may be due to the many strategies that have been implemented in Flathead County over the past 10 years to educate parents and adults on the dangers of underage drinking, and from providing information to parents on what they can do to help prevent/reduce underage alcohol/drug abuse. By talking, talking, talking to their youth, setting boundaries and consequences, Flathead County parents are letting their youth know that underage alcohol/drug use is unacceptable. By the activities of the Flathead County Alcohol Enforcement Team law enforcement activities (compliance checks, shoulder tap operations, cops in shops, party/kegger patrols) Flathead County youth know that if they partake in underage drinking they will be held accountable, and that underage alcohol/drug use in Flathead County is NOT ACCEPTABLE. The Flathead County community and law enforcement actions support the belief that underage drinking is dangerous to youth, and this is a very important message for Flathead County youth.

Perception of Peer Disapproval/Attitude

QUESTION 11 Peer Attitudes and Disapproval

Based on Table 24 and your community's own local data, how does the data about peer attitudes and disapproval towards alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

In 2008 the total percentage of Flathead County students in grades 8, 10 and 12 **who perceive peer disapproval towards Alcohol/Drug Use** was 60.3%, which is 8.1% higher than the state percentage of 55.8% for students in grades 8, 10, and 12 in 2008. However, in 2010 this

perception changed, and the percentage of Flathead County youth **who perceive peer disapproval towards Alcohol/Drug Use** was 60.8%, which is less than the state percentage of 64.4% for the same grades, by 6%. Unfortunately this trend continued in 2012, and the Flathead County youth **who perceive peer disapproval towards Alcohol/Drug Use** in grades 8, 10, and 12 was 63.6%, which is 5% less than the state percentage of 66.7% for the same grades.

Perceived Risk/Harm of Use

QUESTION 12 Perceived Risk/Harm of Use

Based on Tables 26 through 30 and your community's own local data, how does the data about perceived risk/harm of use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

The total percentage of Flathead County Students in grades 8, 10, and 12 for year 2012 **Who Believe it is Wrong to Drink Alcohol** is 67.4%, which is 6.2% less than the state wide percentage of 71.6% of students for the year 2012, in the same grades, 8, 10, 12 **Who Believe It Is Wrong to Drink Alcohol**. And conversely, the Percentage of Students in Flathead County in grades 8, 10, 12 for year 2012 **Who Believe it is Cool to Drink Alcohol Regularly**, is 24.2%, which is higher than the statewide student percentage of 23.5%

The percentage of Flathead County Students **Who Perceive Risk of Harm in Having 1-2 Alcohol Drinks Every Day** in grades 8, 10, and 12 in Year 2012 was 68.5%, which is higher than the state percentage of Students **Who Perceive Risk of Harm if Having 1-2 Alcoholic Drinks Every Day**, which was 64.1%. Unfortunately though, only 56.1% of Flathead County students in grades 8, 10 and 12 in year 2012, **Perceived Risk of Harm in Having 5+ Alcoholic Drinks Every Weekend**, as compared to the state rate of 76% of students **Who Perceive Harm in Having 5+ Alcoholic Drinks Every Weekend** for the same year and grades. **This is a frightening statistic indeed, because of the potential for Flathead County students to be affected by alcohol poisoning, which may lead to death, by consuming a number of drinks over a short period of time.**

Family Communication around Alcohol/Drug Use

QUESTION 13 Family Communications around Alcohol/Drug Use

Based on Table 25 and your community's own local data, how does the data about family communication around alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Unfortunately, in Year 2008 the overall percentage of **Students Who Have Talked with a Parent About the Dangers of Alcohol or Drug Use During the Past 12 Months** for grades 8, 10, and 12 was 42.3%, which is **46% less** than the state percentage of 62.1% of **Students Who Have Talked with a Parent About the Dangers of Alcohol or Drug Use During the Past 12 Months**. This trend continued in Year 2010, for the same grades, with a little improvement – there was only a 36% percent difference between the Flathead County percentage of 43.4%, and the state percentage of 59.8% of **Students Who Have Talked with a Parent about the Dangers of Alcohol or Drug Use during the Past 12 months**.

However, in 2012 the Flathead County percentage of **Students Who Have Talked with a Parent about the Dangers of Alcohol or Drug Use during the Past 12 Months increased – to 79.3%, and surpassed the state percentage of 61.0% by 30%!** It is also important to note that in 2012, the percentage of Flathead County **Students Who Have Talked with a Parent about the Dangers of Alcohol or Drug Use during the Past 12 Months in grades 8, 10, and 12 was 79.3%**, compared to 43.4% for the same grades in 2010 - an 83% increase from year 2010 to year 2012!! This increase might be a result of the work that the STOP Underage Drinking in the Flathead Coalition has done over the past several years in educating parents on the dangers of underage drinking, binge drinking and alcohol poisoning by means of Town Hall meetings, Safety Expos, and information presentations, while also stressing the importance of talking with youth about family expectations and boundaries around alcohol and drug use, the family consequences of their use, and giving parents tips and tools on how to start these conversations with their youth.

Alcohol Use is Causing Problems in Areas of Financial, Legal, Emotional, etc.

QUESTION 14 Alcohol is Causing Problems in Areas related to Financial, Legal, Emotional, etc.

Based on Table 31 and your community's own local data, how does the data about problems related to financial, legal, emotional, etc., around alcohol/drug use in your community compare to the same data across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Unfortunately, the percentage of Flathead County students who believe that **Alcohol is Causing Problems in Areas related to Financial, Legal, Emotional, etc.** is significantly less than the state percentage for the years 2008, 2010, and 2012, for grades 8, 10, 12. Specifically, in year 2008 only 3.3% of Flathead County students in grades 8, 10, and 12, thought that **Alcohol Caused Problems in Areas Related to Financial, Legal, Emotional**. The percentage of Montana students, in year 2008 in grades 8, 10, and 12 who believe that **Alcohol is Causing Problems in Areas related to Financial, Legal, Emotional areas** is 10.2%. Apparently, Flathead County youth are not making the connection that underage drinking causes problems in Financial, Legal, Emotional areas. For instance, in year 2012 the percentage of Flathead County students in grades 8, 10, and 12 who believe that **Alcohol is Causing Problems in Areas related to Financial, Legal, Emotional areas** was 74% less than the state percentage – this is not a good thing, and certainly appears to need addressing in Flathead County.

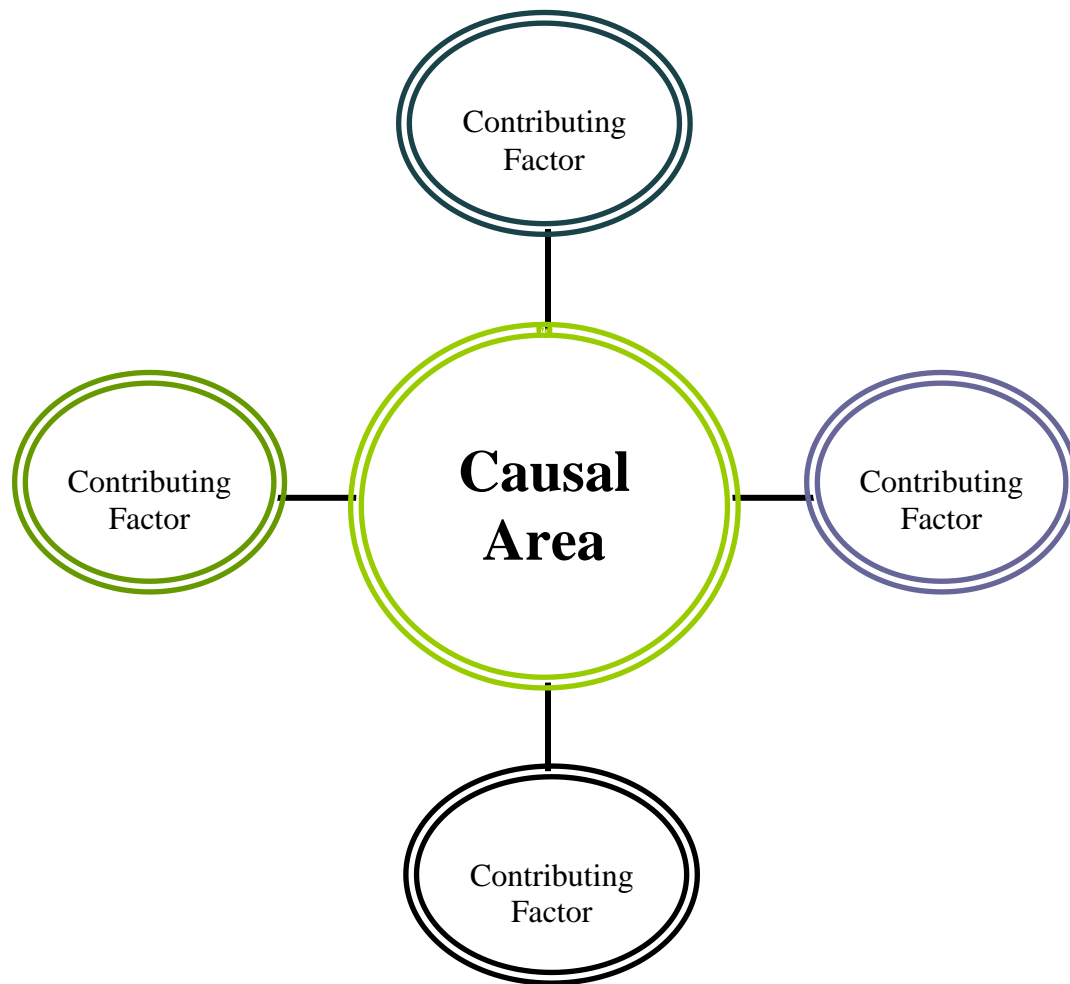
Final Risk Factors Question

QUESTION 15

Based on the risk data collected in questions 10 through 14, how is your community affected by the risk factors outlined above? Explain the rationale for your response.

It appears that Flathead County youth do not realize that there are financial, legal and emotional consequences/problems with underage drinking, and it would appear that Binge drinking is not perceived as a risk leading to harm. These have severe consequences for the Flathead community, as binge drinking can lead to risk of homicide, suicide, criminal mischief, truancy, impaired youth brain development, which was previously noted as **costing the citizens of Montana \$0.2 billion dollars a year**. Flathead County students do not realize the consequences of their underage drinking as a problem to themselves or their community.

Causal Areas



Task Two: Gather Data on Four Causal Areas

RETAIL AVAILABILITY – PART 3

Compliance Checks

The selling of alcohol to minors or to individuals who are intoxicated can contribute to the misuse of alcohol in your community. One measure of this is the failure of compliance checks by retail outlets. Collect the following data for your community. If compliance checks are conducted by more than one agency, it will be necessary to collect data from multiple law agencies in your community (Sheriff, Deputy, City Police, Tribal Law Enforcement, and Highway Patrol). In some counties, the DUI Task Force may have compliance check data available.

QUESTION 16 Compliance Checks

Based on Workbook Part 2 (Local Data) - Table 2-3 does the failure percent seem to be rising or staying the same. Discuss the impact this may be having on your community.

Based on local data for Flathead County, the failure rate is steadily going down – from a high of 30% in 2010, to a low of 26% in 2012!

Research tells us that regular and routine compliance checks are necessary and very important in keeping retail alcohol sales establishments from selling alcohol to underage youth. In fact, compliance checks are one of the most effective ways of reducing the availability of alcohol to youth. When laws are not enforced, it not only enables young people to obtain and drink alcohol, but it also communicates a general indifference on the part of the community that underage drinking is no big deal.

Flathead County is fortunate to have an Alcohol Enforcement Team (AET), which is a multi-jurisdictional special task force comprised of law enforcement officers from all law enforcement agencies in Flathead County, including the Sheriff's Office, Kalispell Police Department, Columbia Falls Police Department, Whitefish Police Department, Montana Highway Patrol, US Forest Service Law Enforcement, and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Law Enforcement Unit. The overtime hours that members of the AET put in conducting compliance checks, shoulder tap operations, party/kegger patrols, and cops in shops activities are paid from EUDL grants that have been received from the Montana Board of Crime Control. The AET is a win/win situation for our community.....it allows the smaller police departments to make underage drinking a priority (which often was not the case prior to the establishment of the AET), due to department budgets and the limited number of law enforcement officers available to conduct

these underage drinking law enforcement activities. It lets Flathead County retail alcohol sales establishments know on a regular and routine basis, that the selling of alcohol to Flathead County youth is unacceptable and against Montana law, and that there are consequences for selling to youth. But, just as important, it lets Flathead County youth know that underage drinking in Flathead County is unacceptable, and if they are drink, they most probably will be caught, and if caught they will receive an MIP citation, thereby holding them accountable for the choices they make.

QUESTION 17 Compliance Checks

If your community does not do compliance checks, does them infrequently, or if residents have no knowledge of the results of compliance checks, how might this affect binge drinking and drinking & driving in your community? Please the rationale for your response.

As noted in Question 16, in Flathead County regular and routine compliance checks are conducted by our Alcohol Enforcement Team. The AET also, performs party/kegger patrols and issues MIP citations. In FY 2007 363 MIP citations were cited into youth court, in FY 2012 only 134 MIP citations were cited into youth court. Flathead's Chief Youth Court Probation Officer has gone on record as indicating that he thinks that is the direct result of the activities of the Flathead County Alcohol Enforcement Team. If these law enforcement activities were not being conducted, Flathead County's MIP citation numbers would not be going down, and instances of binge drinking and youth drinking and driving in our community would be much higher than they are.

Alcohol Seller/Server Training

QUESTION 18 Alcohol Merchant Retail Sales Training

Discuss the trends shown in Workbook Part 2 (Local Data) - Table 2-4. How does the number of Alcohol Merchant Retail Sales Trainings and number of people trained vary over time? Is this trend consistent with the relative growth rate of alcohol licenses and the turnover rate of alcohol servers in your community? Discuss the implications of this trend for binge drinking and drinking and driving in our community.

Flathead County has given Retail Alcohol Sales and Service training on a regular and routine basis since 2005. It was determined by the STOP Underage Drinking in the Flathead Coalition, that if regular and routine compliance checks were conducted, than it was important to train alcohol sales retailers and their employees on the legal ramifications of selling alcohol to youth. Prior to 2005, training was held but very infrequently. In Year 2008 14 trainings were held (they were offered monthly), and 135 people were trained (on a voluntary basis). In 2009 16 trainings were held, and 151 people were trained, and in 2010 7 trainings were held and 90 people were trained. Then in 2011 when Retail Alcohol Sales and Service training were mandated by state law, 95 trainings were held and 1804 people were trained. Altogether, 2,110 people have been trained in Flathead County between the years 2008 and 2012. This not due to growth rate of alcohol licenses and the turn-over rate of alcohol servers, as much is it is due to the increased pressure by the Alcohol Enforcement Team in conducting compliance checks on a regular and routine basis, and due to the state law passed in 2011.

Flathead County's rates of binge drinking and drinking and driving by youth in our community would be much higher, if our alcohol laws were not being enforced.

QUESTION 19 Alcohol Merchant Retail Sales Training

If you community does not hold RBSS trainings, how might this affect binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community?

Flathead County does conduct Retail Alcohol Sales and Service trainings, as mandated by law, but if we did not, than instances of youth binge drinking and drinking and driving in the Flathead County community would be much higher than they are.

Retail Availability Questions

QUESTION 20

Based on information gathered about liquor licenses Workbook Part 1 - Table 32, alcohol compliance checks, Alcohol Merchant Retail Sales Trainings and other local data, what are there retail-availability problems that might contribute to binge drinking and drinking and driving and their consequences in your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

Flathead County has a large number of liquor licensees which means that it takes a lot of manpower and money to pay overtime hours to law enforcement officers of the AET to conduct compliance checks on all of those licensees – which implies that youth may know the establishments that are ready, and willing to sell them alcohol because they have not experienced any consequences from selling alcohol to youth (no compliance checks).

QUESTION 21

Based on the above considerations, to what degree do you believe retail availability is impacting the binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences in your community? Place an “X” on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

No impact											Major impact
0	1	2	3	4	XX	5	6	7	8	9	10

Although the Flathead County Alcohol Enforcement Team conducts regular and routine compliance checks, Flathead County has the second highest number of liquor licensees in the state (Yellowstone County has the highest number of liquor licensees). With such a large number of licensees it is almost impossible to conduct compliance checks on each establishment – which means that if licensees are not being held accountable for selling to youth, then our rates of youth binge drinking and drinking and driving will continue to be high.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE – PART 3

QUESTION 22 Conviction Rates

Based on Table 2-5, discuss the impact the conviction rate may be having on your community.

With conviction rates as low as 50% for multiple DUI citations, and 42% for DUI, it is easy to see that Flathead County is not holding people accountable for their actions once law enforcement has done the job of arresting them. Often Flathead County Prosecutors plead down the DUI charges to a lesser charge because of insufficient manpower to take the cases to court. Unfortunately that sends a message to Flathead County community, that even if someone is arrested for a DUI (or multiple DUIs) there is a high probability that the person will not be held accountable, and will “get off” time and time again. This is very frustrating for Flathead County our law enforcement officers, but it puts our entire community at risk for being involved in a DUI accident, resulting in serious injuries or death.

QUESTION 23

Based on Workbook Part 2 Table 2-6, identify any specific type of crime that has a conviction or dismissal rate noticeably different than others.

Minor in Possession (under 18 and over 18) both have low conviction rates, and high numbers that are dismissed. This is a tragedy, because it sends the message to Flathead County youth that receiving an MIP citation is no big deal. In order to have an impact on youth we want them to know that unequivocally, underage drinking is unacceptable in Flathead County (and in the State of Montana), and there will be consequences for their actions if they choose to use drugs or alcohol.

Key Informant Interviews with Law Enforcement

As part of this environmental assessment you will need to conduct interviews of key law enforcement officers. If your jurisdiction is served by both a police department and a sheriff's department you are encouraged to do an interview with both the Chief of Police and the Sheriff but consider what interviews would be the most appropriate and informative for your community. Other law enforcement to consider includes Tribal Law Enforcement, Highway Patrol, Code Enforcement, Fish and Game or Forest Service.

QUESTION 24 Key Law Enforcement Interviews

Based on your interviews with law enforcement officers others on this topic, what efforts are your law enforcement agencies pursuing to address binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community?

All of Flathead County Law Enforcement agencies are members of the Flathead County Alcohol Enforcement Team, as well as members of the STOP Underage Drinking in the Flathead Coalition, and the Flathead County DUI Task Force, and Safe Kids/Safe Communities' Coalition. Flathead County Law Enforcement agencies are actively involved in these organizations, establishing their commitment to address binge drinking and drinking and driving. Their commitment and support of the Alcohol Enforcement Team in enables them to make underage drinking a priority in their communities, without impacting their fiscal or manpower resources. They see the benefit of that, not only to their police department/law enforcement agency, but to their community as well, as underage binge drinking and drinking and driving in their communities impacts all citizens.

QUESTION 25 Key Law Enforcement Interviews

Based on your interviews with law enforcement officers others on this topic, what efforts are your law enforcement agencies NOT pursuing to address binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community? What appears to be the primary reasons they are not pursuing identified efforts?

One of the activities/efforts that were mentioned numerous times was DUI checkpoints and saturation patrols. All Law Enforcement Chiefs interviewed felt that these would be very impactful in reducing the number of DUI incidents in Flathead County; however, they said they are prohibited from these activities by state law.

Use of Local Ordinances

QUESTION 26 Use of Local Ordinances

Based on Workbook Part 2 (Local Data) - Table 2-7, discuss the application or enforcement of each ordinance that exists in your community. Is the ordinance applied consistently? Is use of the ordinance visible to the community? Does law enforcement view it as a useful tool in addressing alcohol-related problems?

The following are local ordinances that are currently in place and consistently enforced:

- hours and days of sale
- Server training
- Server Licensing
- Restrictions or banning in parks, public spaces, sidewalks, aka "open container law"
- Restrictions /banning in stadiums
- Noise, nuisance, public disturbances, public intoxication
- Administrative penalties for selling alcohol to underage individuals
- Hotlines

Law Enforcement officials see all of the above local ordinances as important to enforcing underage drinking laws and drinking and driving instances. They feel that DUI Safety check point operations conducted on a regular and routine basis would be very effective in controlling incidences of DUI, but are prohibited from conducting these operations by state law.

QUESTION 27 Use of Local Ordinances

Are there ordinances which do not exist in your community but which may be especially effective in addressing your binge drinking or drinking and driving in your community? If so, which ones, and why?

As mentioned above, Flathead County Law Enforcement officials mentioned that they felt that DUI Safety check point operations conducted on a regular and routine basis throughout the year would be effective in controlling incidences of DUI, but a local ordinance cannot be implemented as it is against state law.

Other Local Data: Criminal Justice

Feel free to consider other local data that will help you better understand how and to what extent criminal justice issues in your community may contribute to binge drinking and its consequences in your community. For example, you may have information on a local DUI Taskforce that exists and its activity level. You may be able to assess information from your local drug courts. If you have other local data, describe the results here.

Criminal Justice Questions

QUESTION 28

Based on information gathered from alcohol conviction rates, use of local ordinances, key law enforcement interviews and other local data, how might the local criminal justice system be contributing to binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Provide the rationale for your response.

By dismissing or pleading down cases of DUI, multiple DUI and MIPs. The consequence in our community is that it sends a message to our citizens and youth that DUIs and MIPs are no big deal. In order to change behaviors, there should always be consequences for actions which reinforce the seriousness of the offense, and lets the offenders know that that behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our community.

Flathead County (and Montana State) Judges and Prosecutors should prosecute DUI and MIP offenses to the full extent of the law, in order to impact a reduction in these offenses. It is important for the judicial system to protect the rights of the non-drinking and drivers using Flathead County and Montana state roads, as it is to protect the rights of those charged with a DUI or MIP. DUI fatalities are not accidents – they are felonies and DUIs should be treated with appropriate seriousness by our court systems if we are going to get DUI offenders off the road and from behind the wheel of a vehicle if they have been drinking. Drinking and driving is not acceptable and puts the lives of innocent citizens at risk – every hour of every day.

QUESTION 29

Based on the considerations in Question 21, to what degree do you believe the concerns around criminal justice are contributing to binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Provide the rationale for your response.

No impact											Major impact
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Rational was provided in response to Question 28.

SOCIAL AVAILABILITY – PART 3

Social availability includes the obtaining of alcohol from friends, associates and family members, but it also refers to the availability of alcohol at gatherings such as parties and other social events where the alcohol is provided as part of the event.

QUESTION 30 Prevention Needs Assessment

Based on Tables 35 and 36, how does student perception of being caught for drinking in your community compare to the perception across the state? Is your problem bigger, smaller or about the same? Discuss the differences.

Unfortunately, despite the on-going law enforcement activities of the Alcohol Enforcement Team in enforcing underage drinking laws, the percentage of Flathead County Students Who Thought He/She would be caught by Police if They Drank Beer, Wine or Hard Liquor was less than the percentage of Montana state percentage of students. Specifically, in Flathead County in 2012 the total for grades 8, 10, and 12 of students who thought they would be caught was 19.3% , and the total percentage for those same grades in for the state of Montana was 26.2% - a difference of 36%.

Social Availability Questions

QUESTION 31

Based on information gathered from law enforcement interviews, public opinion surveys, the Prevention Needs Assessment, and other local data what are the concerns around social availability that might contribute to binge drinking, drinking and driving, and respective consequences in your community? Provide the rationale for your response.

Flathead County has a high percentage of students who **Believe if They Wanted to Get Alcohol It Would be Easy**, and a high percentage of **Students Who Believe if They Wanted to Get Drugs It Would be Easy**, therefore, it would be safe to say that social availability definitely contributes to binge drinking and drinking and driving. 61.7% of Flathead County students believe that it would be easy to get alcohol. Although this number is less than the state percentage of 66.6% (Totals for grades 8, 10, 12 in year 2012), it is still a high number – more than half think it would be easy to get alcohol – which means that it probably is, and that would definitely contribute to binge drinking and drinking and driving.

Unfortunately 17.9% of Flathead students believe that it would be easy to obtain drugs, which is less than the Montana student percentage of 18.0%, but is still a high percentage, in either case.

QUESTION 32

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe social availability is impacting binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences in your community? Place an “X” on the scale below. Provide the rationale for your response.

No impact										Major impact
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	XX8	9	10

Due to the fact that high numbers of Flathead County students believe that Alcohol is easy to get, it is, therefore, a safe assumption to make that this is indeed true. Therefore, the easy availability of alcohol to Flathead County youth, would most definitely impact binge drinking and drinking and driving in Flathead County. In order to keep Flathead County youth from using alcohol, it is then imperative that Flathead County Law Enforcement, Business Owners, and community members make it harder for youth to obtain alcohol. If youth are not able to obtain alcohol, then they are not able to use alcohol, therefore, social availability was rated as an 8.

PROMOTION – PART 3

Promotion refers to attempts by alcohol retailers and the alcohol industry to increase demand through the marketing of their products. Once again, this will require some original data collection to acquire a sense of the depth and potential impact of various marketing tactics surrounding alcohol in your community.

Advertising

QUESTION 33 Advertising

Based on the data you collected regarding the level of advertising in local print media within your community, advertising via signage on buildings within your community and advertising via sponsorship of local events, is the overall level of alcohol advertising in your community excessive? Provide the rationale for your response.

The level of advertising in local print media and building signage in Flathead County is less than in some areas. It is surprising that the numbers of ads in local newspapers were not higher than they were. One reason may be that not as many people read newspapers in today's world as they did previously, and are using other social media avenues to access local and national news information, so it would only stand to reason then, that advertisers are following these trends, and advertising more on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Web pages, etc.

QUESTION 34 Advertising

Based on the data collected regarding the level of advertising in local print media within your community, advertising via signage on buildings within your community and advertising via sponsorship of local events, how might the magnitude of alcohol advertising in your community be impacting binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences?

It appears that in Flathead County, due to the low levels of building signage, and advertising in local print media, is not having as much of an impact on binge drinking and drinking and driving and its consequences, as radio, TV, movie and sports event advertising of the pleasures of alcohol use, and the use of Facebook, Twitter, etc. to spread word of mouth advertising of alcohol. These media outlets all normalize alcohol use and are more impactful on our youth of today than newspapers and building signage.

QUESTION 35 Alcohol-Related News Articles

Based on the data collected regarding the number of news articles in contrast to the amount of advertising in local print media within your community, how do you think alcohol use is being portrayed? How do you think this is impacting binge drinking and drinking and driving in your community?

Alcohol is portrayed in the movies, on the radio, on TV and on Facebook, Twitter and other social media outlets, as something that everyone does, and that definitely impacts the rate of binge drinking and drinking and driving in our community, as it normalizes the activity.

Although the number of alcohol advertisements exceeds the number of news articles in our local papers, there were still a large number news articles about alcohol consequences and public service announcements warning of the dangers of underage drinking and alcohol use. Alcohol is being portrayed and something everyone does, especially around any holiday. This normalizes the use of alcohol and portrays it as something is needed to have a good time or celebrate a holiday.

Promotion Questions

QUESTION 36

Based on information gathered from sponsorships, advertising and other local data, what are the concerns around promotion that might contribute to binge drinking and drinking and driving and the associated consequences in your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

The impact of social media outlets, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., appears to be having more of an impact on Flathead County youth around binge drinking, and drinking and driving, than newspaper ads and building signage. Nationwide, there have been many stories and pictures of youth drinking parties portraying binge drinking, and being posted for all to see on Facebook pages, including the sexual assaults of young women who have been drinking or are drunk. This, undoubtedly, is having a much larger impact on the behavior of Flathead County youth regarding binge drinking and drinking and driving, as it normalizes these behaviors, and reduces the “shock factor”, than building signage, newspaper ads, and corporate sponsorships.

QUESTION 37

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe promotion is impacting binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

No impact										Major impact	
0	1	2	3	XX4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Indeed, social media certainly has an impact on binge drinking in Flathead County, especially with all the new forms of media available to youth and adults (Facebook, twitter, etc.) However, availability to social media is very hard to control or modify, so this area was rated a 4 because it will be hard to modify these behaviors to reduce and prevent underage drinking and binge drinking. Reducing the availability of alcohol to youth in Flathead County will better help reduce and prevent underage drinking and binge drinking.

SCHOOL POLICIES – PART 3

QUESTION 38

Based on information gathered from your school districts, what are the concerns around how those policies contribute to either the underage substance use or reduce underage substance abuse and the associated consequences in your community? Explain the rationale for your response.

All five High Schools in Flathead County and their corresponding School Districts have school policies and student contracts concerning underage substance use. This is a good thing in that there is uniform policies across the county, however, all of those school policies involve out of school suspension and expulsions for infractions, and there has been much research and controversy nationwide about how effective (or ineffective) it is to suspend or expel students for substance abuse infractions as a way to reduce underage substance use, because these sanctions only give those 'at risk' students more time to use and lead to further disengagement from school, which is a risk factor for substance use to begin with. This is a catch 22 scenario and one that is not easy to address, nor does it seem that our school districts are willing to change, and so they continue to do what they have always done – suspend or expel – and will continue until research provides some best practices to use instead.

QUESTION 39

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe your school district's policies and programs in your community are impacting binge drinking and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

No impact										Major impact	
0	1	2	3	XX4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Due to other causal factors that are having a bigger impact on underage alcohol and prescription drug abuse in Flathead County, School Policy was rated as a 4. Hopefully, in the future when research has provided better alternatives to school suspensions for drug and alcohol use, more emphasis will be placed on School Policies.

MEDICAL FIELD INFORMATION – PART 3

QUESTION 40

Based on information gathered from local hospitals, pharmacies, and prescribers, what are the concerns around prescription drug about in your area? Explain the rationale for your response.

The concern of Flathead County's local hospitals, pharmacies, pharmacists, and nursing staff is that Doctors too frequently prescribe pain medications, in too large amounts, with infrequent follow-up. This often creates left over pills (for those individuals that do not use all of the pain medication), which is then usually saved for future use, and thereby often becomes accessible to be taken by other family members (i.e., youth in the family to either use or sell). For those individuals that receive these large prescription amounts that are addicted to prescription drugs it gives them a ready supply. Additionally, only 21.4% of the prescribers of pain medications in Flathead County are registered in the Montana Prescription Drug Registry – which makes it easy for addicts and abusers to Doctor Shop for prescription pain medications, as their actions are not being tracked/recognized by Doctors prescribing these medications.

QUESTION 41

Based on these considerations, to what degree do you believe the medical field data you collect is impacting prescription drug abuse and its consequences in your community? Place an "X" on the scale below. Explain the rationale for your response.

No impact

0

1

2

3

4

5

XX6

7

8

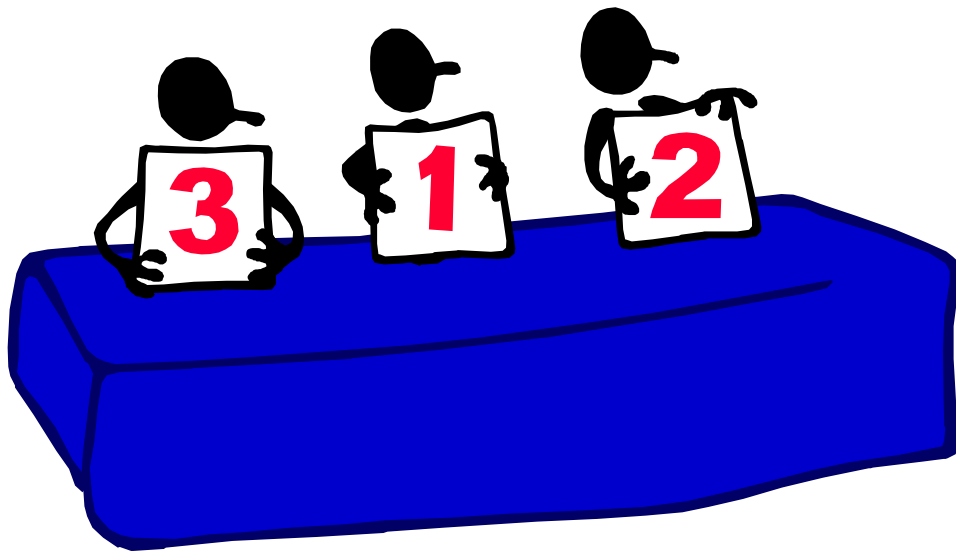
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Major impact

Prescription Drug abuse is becoming a nationwide epidemic and Flathead County is seeing an increase in prescription drug abuse, as well. Readily available prescription drugs, whether from the family medicine cabinet or from easily obtained prescriptions (due to a low incidence of monitoring by Doctors) puts our youth and community members at risk. Therefore, Prescription Drug abuse and its consequences in Flathead County were rated as a 6.

Prioritization



Task Three:
**Rank the Six Causal Areas from the Greatest Contributor to Your
Community's Problems to the Smallest Contributor**

Prioritizing

The next stage involves prioritizing the causal areas. The first step is achieved by placing the appropriate scores from Questions 14, 22, 25, and 29 next to its related causal area. Based on the scores, rank each causal area with 1 being the highest priority and 4 the lowest. In the case of a tie, decide which area is of higher priority for your community in relation to binge drinking, drinking and driving, and motor vehicle crashes. After having completed the ranking, explain the rationale for your rankings on the next page.

The prioritization will be the basis of for determining which combination of environmental prevention policies, practices and programs are strategically best for your community.

Score Rank Causal Area

5

4

Retail Availability

9

1

Criminal Justice

8

2

Social Availability

4

5

Promotion

4

6

School Policy

6

3

Medical Availability

QUESTION 42

Provide the rationale for your rankings of the causal factors.

Very concerning in Flathead County, is how many times DUIs, multiple DUIs, and MIPs are pled down to lesser charges, or dismissed. This seems to have a significant impact on binge drinking, drinking and driving, and motor vehicle crashes – as what are the consequences of those actions? Therefore, in Flathead County, Criminal Justice was ranked the number 1 Causal Area. Every time a DUI incidence is pled down, the judicial system puts the lives of innocent citizens at risk of being involved in a motor vehicle accident with a drunk or impaired driver. Research tells us that drunk drivers have usually driven up to 80 times impaired before they are actually caught and given a DUI – a very frightening statistic, to say the least. And the youth caught driving impaired today, are the drunk drivers of tomorrow, if they do not receive treatment, or are not held accountable for their actions.....if their arrests are pled down or dismissed, then the message is sent that impaired driving and underage alcohol use is no big deal – just a “rite of passage”, and a bigger injustice is done, by sending this message, as it will not stop those behaviors.

Because the use rates of alcohol and drugs for Flathead County youth is high, and the perception that alcohol and drugs are easy to obtain, Social Availability was ranked as the number 2 Causal Area.

Prescription drug use is increasing in Flathead County, and due to the fact that only 21.4% of pain medication drug prescribers are registered in the Montana Drug Registry, Medical Availability has been ranked as the number 3 Causal Area in Flathead County.

Even though much has been accomplished by making Retail Alcohol Sales and Service training mandatory, as defined by state law, and due to the fact that high numbers of sales staff and servers in Flathead County are receiving training and Flathead County’s compliance failure rates are going down, Retail Availability was ranked number 4 in Causal Area.

It does not appear that Promotion, as defined in this work book, is impacting Flathead County’s binge drinking and drinking rates and motor vehicle crashes, therefore it was ranked number 5 as a Causal Area.

School Policy was ranked as the number 6 Causal Area, due to the fact that all five High Schools in Flathead County do have policies concerning the use of drugs and alcohol on school property, and for participation in athletic activities.

Final Question



Task Five:
Determine What Combination of Causal Areas
Your Community should Target

Your Final Conclusions

Now that you have considered the data surrounding your community's alcohol problems, as well as each causal area for these problems, you need to decide what to do. This decision will ultimately be part of your community's Strategic Plan and lead to very specific environmental evidence-based strategies for you to implement. For now, think about your data and especially your final rankings on page 66 as well as your resource assessment on page 69. Also, mull over the possible connections among the four causal areas. Would it be possible to target social availability without also targeting criminal justice/law enforcement? Will changes in retail availability necessarily require changes in the enforcement of policy? Now answer the following question.

Final Needs Assessment Question

QUESTION 43

It is very unlikely that your community can or needs to address every causal area to impact existing binge drinking and drinking and driving problems. What combination of causal areas is most likely to produce changes in the environment which currently exists within your community? What specific causal factors will you target and why?

Due to the number of impaired drivers, and DUI accidents in Flathead County (including the death of three Montana Highway patrolmen, due to impaired drivers,) it is imperative to get the Criminal Justice System (i.e. the courts) on board with the implications of their decisions on binge drinking and drinking and driving problems in the Flathead County community.

Conviction rates are too low, and the number of cases that are pled down or dismissed is totally unacceptable if Flathead County is to see a decrease in the rates of binge drinking and drinking and driving problems. For the safety of all Flathead County residents (and State of Montana residents), it should be a priority to keep those individuals charged with DUI off of Montana roads. Being able to set up DUI safety checkpoints would also go a long way in holding folks accountable for drinking and driving.

Additionally, it is very important to address the rates of social availability in the Flathead community. It should not be easy for Flathead County youth to access drugs or alcohol, it is very important to increase the activities law enforcement activities, through the activities of the Alcohol Enforcement Team to prevent Flathead County youth from obtaining drugs and alcohol. In doing so, Flathead County is helping to protect our youth from the dire consequences of underage alcohol and drug use.